

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Murphy Catton, Inc.

Kentucky Manufacturing Assistance Center

Murphy Catton Displays Evidence Of Continuous Improvement

Client Profile:

Murphy Catton, Inc. is a full-service manufacturer of award-winning museum, attraction, and tradeshow exhibits that are designed, engineered, and fabricated in-house. Founded in a small garage in 1983, Murphy Catton now inhabits two buildings in Walton, Kentucky, totaling 80,000 square feet on 13 acres -- with plans for further expansion. The staff includes more than 20 full-time craftsmen, project managers, detailers, and office support staff; additional freelance artists, sculptors, designers, and craftsmen are brought in on a project basis.

Situation:

Since 1983, Murphy Catton's two owners have handled all the day-to-day facets of their business. After a decade of success and growth, the owners needed to establish a strategic planning process to better map their future, and to create a plan for management succession. Murphy Catton sought help from a provider with established credentials in strategic planning and the ability to access and utilize additional resources for benchmarking the company's marketing and financial structures. The owners selected the Kentucky Manufacturing Assistance Center (KMAC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to help them develop and implement their strategic planning goals.

Solution:

KMAC's approach to facilitating Murphy Catton's strategic planning process included four separate phases: preparation, planning, implementation, and follow-up. Impartial assessments, audits, interviews, analysis, and surveys conducted by KMAC during Phase I laid a foundation for success. In Phase II, this information served as the basis for identifying strategic goals, objectives, and actions--and for developing the final plan. The implementation phase trained teams and designated project leaders to oversee each strategic initiative. Finally, KMAC established a procedure to review implementation plans and initiatives, in case course corrections needed to be made.

Results:

Increased sales by \$1 million.

Increased sales per employee from 5 to 9 percent.

Realized cost savings of \$250,000.

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Increased competitive position.
Created 15 additional jobs.
Improved business strategic planning.
Retained 3 jobs.
Increased investments by \$2.46 million.

Testimonial:

"After 10 years of very successful growth, we had a pretty good idea about how to compete in today's global market. What we needed, though, was a proven planning process that would give us a solid roadmap for the future, a process in which we all have input and understanding, and one which gives us the best shot at staying ahead of the competition. What we needed we got -- from the Kentucky Manufacturing Assistance Center."

Mark Catton, President